



WAY OF THE HEARTBEAT

P

iercing the veil with only focus only, those disciplined in the way of the heartbeat constantly balance themselves between life and death. While their reasons for riding this thin line may vary, the power and deadliness granted by the martial art remains the same.

SUBCLASS FEATURES

LAST RITES

3rd-level Heartbeat feature

You can cast the *Detect Evil and Good* and *Gentle Repose* spells, but only as rituals.

In addition, you can change the damage type of any unarmed strike or monk weapon attack you make to necrotic.

DYING BREATH

3rd-level Heartbeat feature

Whenever you make a death saving throw, you can choose any number of creatures within a radius around you equal to your Unarmored Movement bonus. Each target takes necrotic damage equal to a roll of your Martial Arts die, or double the dice if you succeed the saving throw.

Further, when you are forced to make a death saving throw, you can choose to ignore it and not do so or willingly fail. You can also choose to make a death saving throw at the start of each of your turns, even while your hit points are not at 0.

Rolling while stable has you only keep track of failures. These failures don't reset from becoming stable and, if you roll your third failure, you only die if you're reduced to 0 hit points and still have all three failures.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6th-level Heartbeat feature

Whenever you or an ally within 30 feet of you succeeds a death saving throw, you can have another dying creature within the same range mark a successful death saving throw, potentially stabilizing them.

Additionally, you gain resistance to necrotic damage.

GHOST BUSTER

11th-level Heartbeat feature

When you deal damage to a target, you can ignore any temporary hit points or damage resistances to necrotic it has.

In addition, you can add your number of currently marked death saving throws to any damage rolls you make.

HEART ATTACK

17th-level Heartbeat feature

You can spend marked death saving throws as if they were ki points. Spending a failed death saving throw immediately forces you to make another death saving throw which cannot be ignored by Dying Breath.

ART BY TOM TAYLOR AND ANDY KUBERT

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR THE SUBCLASS

This page is not required to play the subclass. It offers bonus content and suggestions for implementing it in a world.

QUICK BUILDS

- **Action:** Attack
- **Bonus Action:** Flurry of Blows, Martial Arts
- **Reaction:** Deflect Missiles
- **Movement:** Get an enemy into your reach to attack before moving out of its range

GRIM REAPER

You can make a Heartbeat Monk quickly by following these suggestions. First, make Dexterity your highest ability score, followed by Constitution or Wisdom. Second, choose the acolyte background.

- **Equipment:** none
- **Feats:** Lucky, Mobile, Skill Expert or Death Averse

DEATH AVERSE

Prerequisite: None

Repeatable: No

You gain the following benefits:

- Increase your Constitution score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- Whenever you finish a long rest, you can mark a number of successful death saving throws equal to half your proficiency bonus, even while your hit points are not at 0. These tracked successes don't reset when you regain hit points.

SUBCLASS OPTIONS & RULES

If you need help building a character or you wish to have more character options for the Subclass, you can find it here.

"SAGE ADVICE"

Rulings that should be enforced to properly play the subclass.

Bustin'. The damage bonus granted by Ghost Buster uses both failed and successful death saving throws.

Limited Death. You can't have more than 3 successful or failed death saving throws marked at a time.

Resuscitation. Getting healed resets failed death saving throws gained from Dying Breath.

OPTIONAL FEATURES

Optional and Replacement features available to the subclass.

Corpse Whisperer. At 13th level, You can cast *Speak with Dead* at will, without expending a spell slot.

Undying Body. At 15th level, you have advantage on death saving throws. Further, you don't gain the consequences of exhaustion so long as you don't have 5 or more levels of the condition.

SUBCLASS IMPLEMENTATION

If you are unsure on how to implement the Subclass into your game world, here are some suggestions on how to do so.

CREATING DEATH AVATARS

In areas of mass death, those that know the way of the heartbeat either manifested into the world as a sort of death elemental or have learned to manage their own body to stave off the cause of unlife.

SONG "BUSTIN' " BY NEIL CIEREGA

▶ 0:00 / 0:00 ————— 🔊 ⋮

QUESTS TO BE THE SUBCLASS

A collection of quests to become the subclass.

Spooky Society. After your party has defeated an undead, an occult society has revealed themselves to you and have asked if you'd want to join them. Upon accepting, they wish to perform a ritual to unlock your ki paths. To succeed the ritual, you must defeat a ghost or specter while you're below half your hit points.

QUESTS INVOLVING THE SUBCLASS

A collection of quests related to the subclass.

Protection from Investigation. A haunted mansion is currently being investigated by a reckless exorcist. The party's been hired to make sure there is still a home left after they're done dealing with the ghost.

Ethereal Capture. The nobles of high society wish to capture a ghost that's been terrorizing the local townsfolk and display them in a museum to improve the local economy. If the party accepts the job, an excommunicated exorcist meets them mid-mission telling the group the ghost is harmless.

MAGIC ITEM: EXORCIST OIL

common potion, worth 50 gp

This shimmering translucent oil bubbles with screams. You can drink the oil as an action or spend 1 minute coating 1 weapon or up to 5 pieces of ammunition in oil. Any damage dealt by anyone that drinks the oil or anything coated in the oil changes to radiant. After 1 hour, the effects of the oil wear off.